Will, Joseph Stanley [Professor of French]

1918 (041)

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May 31st, 1918

Professor J. S. Will,

University College.

Dear Professor Will:

I received the enclosed letter from Miss Phillips and sent it to Professor Wrong. He tells me that the arrangements have not been working very well and is of opinion that I ought to refer the letter to you. I would like to be able to assure Miss Phillips that we are endeavouring to give her full justice.

With kind regards, I am,

Yours sincerely,

President.

Will, Joseph Stanley [Professor of French]

1918 (041)

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University of Toronto.

TORONTO, CANADA.

56 Rawleigh Ave.

Toronto. June 8. 1918.

Dear Mr. President.

Your letter concerning Miss Phillips reached me this morning. As I have been in bed for the last three weeks my University mail has been irregular in reaching me.

You may rest assured that no injustice is being done by the University to Miss Phillips. She was a student in Modern Languages who chose History as a pass subject and failed so badly in History that the examiners could do nothing for her — Professor Hosmer promptly being the examiner. She has not tried a supplemental examination.

Such are the bald facts: now for the gloss.

Her failure was due to her own heedlessness. She had good ability but paid no attention whatever to her work — with me, at least. Unlike any other student I ever had in the Fourth year, she was practically never present at lectures. When I spoke to her twice on the matter she was endangering her year, telling her that theatricals & other outside activities were occupying too much of her time, she said nothing about illness at home and

P.T.O.

showed no improvement in her work. It was only after the publication of results that illness at home was mentioned to me — and by her sister. It was her sister, too, who told me that she, the writer of the letter, connected her failure with my reprimand and laid at my door the responsibility for it. This she would do the more readily in that she knew that she could not have passed in what she wrote on the French section of the paper. No one ever came to my office to discuss Miss Phillips's case. Her sister met me once in the corridor twice on the street-car when I talked casually of the situation. I told her then that I did not think an appeal would produce any change & that Miss P. had better face the supplemental arrangement. Moreover the sister told me (unhesitatingly) that Marguerite would never write the supplemental — she did not want her degree from Toronto.

Miss Phillips is throwing a smoke screen about her case by talking of confusion in requirements. Whatever confusion there may have been in certain minds, at first
that could not understand the compromise we have to make with the Department of Education, there was never any confusion about a case like hers, that is in the case of a student who chose History

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as a pass subject. Her case was perfectly clear. The confusion arose in the case of a Mod. Lang. student who chose say Philosophy as a pass subject — for the Mod. language Department wanted all students of French & German to take the History given by the Department so that they might get a better background for their study of Literature. On this point agreement was reached during the year. Miss Phillips cannot make capital of this situation for she was not concerned in it.

It is sheer moonshine to say that I told her she would pass. I never did such a stupid thing in my life — certainly not to Miss Phillips after my reprimand during the year. I do sometimes at the close of the year tell my classes, in a poor effort at a joke, that everybody will pass — who hands in work. Miss Phillips may have turned up in time to hear some such statement.

Now, Mrs. President, I'm tired and the meat he has — if you have come this far. But there is one more point to clear up — that concerning the typed letter papers. The History Department, crippled by the War,

asked us to do certain teaching in History for the Moderns students, undertaking to do one hour a week, out of three, in General European History. (It promptly stirred characteristic energy took two hours, robbing us of me). The History Department named Professor Hovey suggested as examiners for History for Moderns students. The papers we set were submitted to Prof. Wray who added questions on his branch of the work. Thus the student's interest was safeguarded in examining. Miss Phillips cannot have just ground of complaint from that point of view.

I am sorry if Professor Wray feels dissatisfied. He has seemed to be perfectly happy. I should be the first to meet him in any re-arrangement he has to suggest. I may make some suggestion myself, for certainly the present system has one disadvantage, that of really teaching the Moderns students some history.

I am again sorry if I have wearied you - but you sent me Miss Phillips letter, which I take pleasure in returning.

Yours sincerely

J. Paul Rée

June 12th, 1918

Professor J. S. Will,

56 Ranliegh Avenue,

Toronto.

Dear Professor Will:

I am very sorry to have given you all that trouble about Miss Phillips, especially when you have been laid aside through overwork. At the same time I thank you for the pains that you have taken to explain to me Miss Phillips' case and I have written to her the substance of your reply. Probably it is another instance of a disappointed student wishing to find some one else to blame for her failure.

I will also speak to Professor Wrong again about the relations in regard to History, but I should not want to worry you with this while you are under the weather. Hoping that you will soon be very much better, I am,

Yours sincerely,

President.